



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Peter McWalters
Commissioner

July 15, 2005

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Peter McWalters, Commissioner

SUBJECT: **Final FY 2006 Education Aid Entitlements**

Final FY 2006 education aid entitlements based on the FY 2006 appropriations act are now available on the Rhode Island Department of Education website. This year's budget increases the student equity fund by \$10M, the professional development fund by \$2.5M and adds a small amount of money to ensure that each district receives a minimum overall aid increase from FY 2005 of either \$50,000 or 3%, whichever is less. The technology, early childhood, vocational equity, and targeted aid categories are level funded, and the full day kindergarten, group home and charter school indirect aid are fully funded. As in past years, 5% of the student equity and targeted aid funds are restricted, and will only be paid to districts upon the Commissioner's approval. **The professional development fund again must be split between activities at the district and school levels, with 75% to be spent in the latter category; however, a major change for FY 2006 is that the entire fund is restricted and will only be paid upon the Commissioner's approval.** The Department will be issuing guidelines for submitting and approving each district's professional development plan.

The budget makes other aid related changes. First, full day kindergarten aid will no longer be based on the October 1 enrollment, but instead on the June 30 end of year data collected through the new student based system. This system will also generate data for all the other investment funds except group home aid, e.g., free and reduced school lunch, limited English proficient and vocational education counts. These changes were made in order to have accurate data on a timely basis and to allow for review of the data prior to its use for FY 2007 aid projections. Group home bed counts will still be provided by the Department of Children, Youth and Families, but this count will now be provided as of June 30. Second, the school breakfast program is distributed on a per meal subsidy. Third, school housing aid for new bonded projects will now be based on annual bond principal and interest payments. In addition, the state share for new bonded projects will be fixed over the life of the bonds, and aid for projects supported by bonds issued through the Rhode Island Health and Education Building Corporation will be paid directly to that agency.

To download the data, go to www.ridoe.net/funding/aid and click on the entry that reads "Final FY 2006 Education Aid Entitlements." The first three pages show the dollar amounts of aid by category and total aid for each district. Page 4 shows that portion of the total aid that is restricted, and which will not be paid as part of the monthly aid vouchers. Page 5 shows the split of the professional development fund between the 25% district and 75% school allocations. The amounts on pages 4 and 5 are breakouts of aid categories that are included on pages 1 through 3, and do not represent additional funds to the total aid shown on page 3.

I encourage you to forward this e-mail to all interested parties including the appropriate municipal officers. Please call Celeste Bilotti at 222-4648 with any questions or for additional information, or e-mail her directly at celeste.Bilotti@ride.ri.gov (**do not reply to this e-mail**).

PM/CPB/jlb
cc: School Business Officials

Telephone (401) 222-4600 Fax (401) 222-6178 TTY 800-745-5555 Voice 800-745-6575

The Board of Regents does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, sex,
sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, or disability